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~~SWP~~

The President's Daily Brief

April 1, 1974

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~~*Top Secret*~~ 25X1

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

April 1, 1974

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Reports received over the weekend reflect a developing sense of crisis on the Golan Heights. *(Page 1)*

Cambodia's president yesterday announced the dissolution of the three-man High Political Council; it is to be replaced by a slightly larger "executive" body. Meanwhile, the Khmer Communist "defense minister" is to arrive in China today, where presumably he will consult with Sihanouk and his foreign "ambassadors," who are meeting there. *(Page 2)*

The Thai military is showing new signs of restiveness. *(Page 3)*

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SYRIA-ISRAEL

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Reports received over the weekend reflect a developing sense of crisis on the Golan Heights.

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CAMBODIA

Cambodian President Lon Nol announced yesterday the dissolution of the three-man High Political Council. It is to be replaced by a slightly larger "executive" body. The new body is supposed to aid the President in examining "important questions" submitted by the government and the army. In addition to Lon Nol, the council reportedly is to be composed of Prime Minister Long Boret, army chief General Fernandez, and former prime minister Sirik Matak.

The High Political Council was supposed to have brought together disparate political factions for a more effective government. It failed to do so, in part because both Lon Nol and Sirik Matak distrusted its third member, former chief of state Cheng Heng, who has been left out of the new grouping.

The new council presumably has the same basic aims as its predecessor. Its effectiveness, however, will depend heavily on whether Lon Nol and Sirik Matak can work together. The notoriously poor relations between the two have led to a recent round of rumors that Matak is plotting a coup.

* * *

Peking announced that Khmer Communist "defense minister" Khieu Samphan will arrive in China today. He presumably intends to consult with Sihanouk and his foreign "ambassadors," who are meeting there, ostensibly to celebrate the Queen Mother's birthday. The talks will probably center on the military situation in Cambodia, possible future strategies for the Khmer insurgents, and the results of Samphan's trip to North Vietnam.

The level of Hanoi's aid to the Khmer insurgency probably dominated the talks between Samphan and the North Vietnamese. North Vietnamese leaders Truong Chinh and Le Thanh Nghi took the occasion of Samphan's visit to reiterate North Vietnam's support for the Khmer Communist political program and to promise that Hanoi's aid would continue. Chinh stated that "no insidious scheme" could prevent Hanoi from assisting the Cambodians.

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THAILAND

The Thai military, troubled by the Sanya government's lack of decisive leadership as well as its own diminished influence in national affairs, is showing new signs of restiveness.

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